

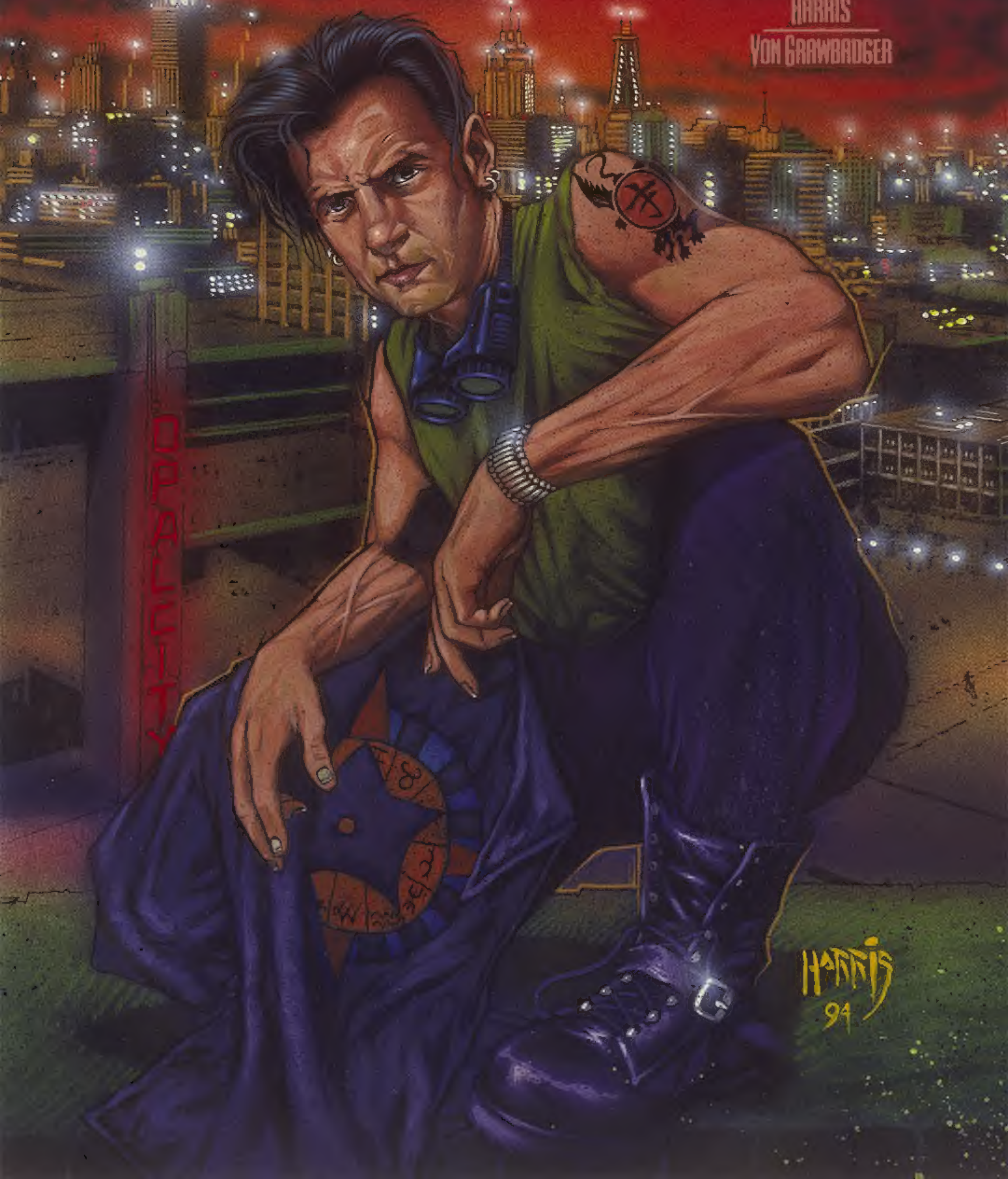


# STARMAN



**4**  
FEB 95  
\$1.95 US  
\$2.75 CAN  
£1.25 UK

ROBINSON  
HARRIS  
VON GRAWBADER



HARRIS  
94



# PROLOGUE

HE APPEARED ON THE BEACH ONE MORNING, RANTING AND SCREAMING AND SINGING SHOW TUNES. THE HAWAIIAN WINDS WERE GENTLE THAT DAY, SO HIS VOICE CARRIED FAR AND DREW MUCH ATTENTION.

HE CLAIMED HE WAS TRAINED IN MYSTICISM, A STRAIN OF ARCAIC STUDY PERFECTED SOUTH, SOUTH, SOUTH AMONG THE MOUNTAIN DWELLERS OF THE ANDES.

HE CLAIMED TO BE AN ARTIST. A SIGN PAINTER. A SCULPTOR.

SOME DOUBTED THIS, SO HE DREW A QUICK RENDERING OF MADONNA AND CHILD IN THE SAND. SO FINE WAS THE ART-WORK THAT, AS THE TIDE ROLLED IN TO CLAIM IT, PEOPLE CRIED AT THE LOSS.

THE MAN HAD HUMOR AND TERRIBLE HYGIENE. THE MAN WAS WILD AND THOUGHTFUL AND QUICK, AND THE PEOPLE OF THIS AREA TOOK HIM IN AS ONE OF THEIR OWN.

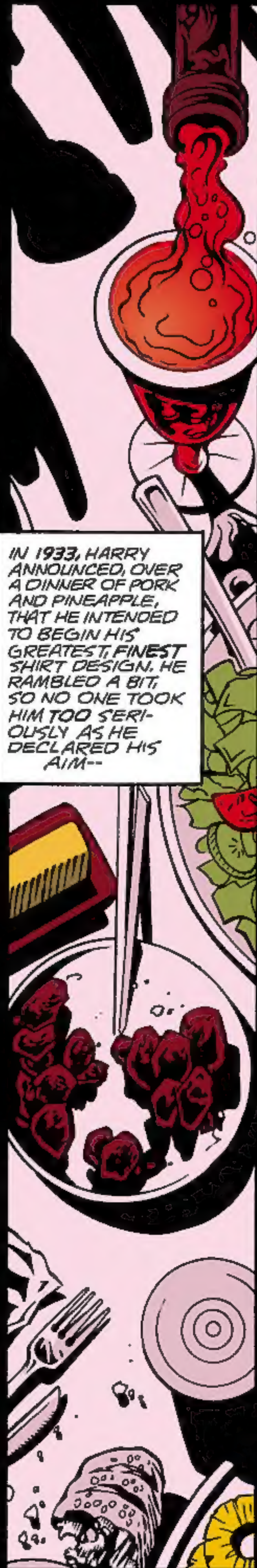
FOR THESE WERE A PEOPLE WHO ACCEPTED. THEY ACCEPTED EACH OTHER AND ANY NEW-COMER WHO ADDED TO THE MIX AND WHOSE COMPANY WAS ENJOY-ABLE.

WORK CAME TO THIS MAN BY CHANCE. THERE WAS DEMAND FOR HIS ART-WORK, BUT IN A FORM EVEN HE IN HIS CRAZIEST OF CRAZED TIMES HADN'T ENVISIONED--

HAWAIIAN SHIRTS.

THE LOUD, CRAZY MAN WAS HARRY AJAX. IT WAS 1931. AND FOR A FEW STERLING YEARS, HIS WORK WAS RENOWNED.





IN 1933, HARRY ANNOUNCED, OVER A DINNER OF PORK AND PINEAPPLE, THAT HE INTENDED TO BEGIN HIS GREATEST, FINEST SHIRT DESIGN. HE RAMBLED A BIT, SO NO ONE TOOK HIM TOO SERIOUSLY AS HE DECLARED HIS AIM--

--TO COMBINE HIS MYSTIC ABILITIES WITH THE DESIGN OF HIS SHIRTS... AND PAINT THE GATEWAY TO HEAVEN ON THE BACK OF ONE OF THEM.

THE PEOPLE LISTENED AND LAUGHED AND CONTINUED TO EAT. THEY THOUGHT THIS WAS MERELY "HARRY BEING HARRY." THEY SOON FORGOT.



HARRY BEGAN HIS MASTERWORK THE FOLLOWING AFTERNOON.

BY NINE O'CLOCK THAT EVENING, IT WAS FINISHED.

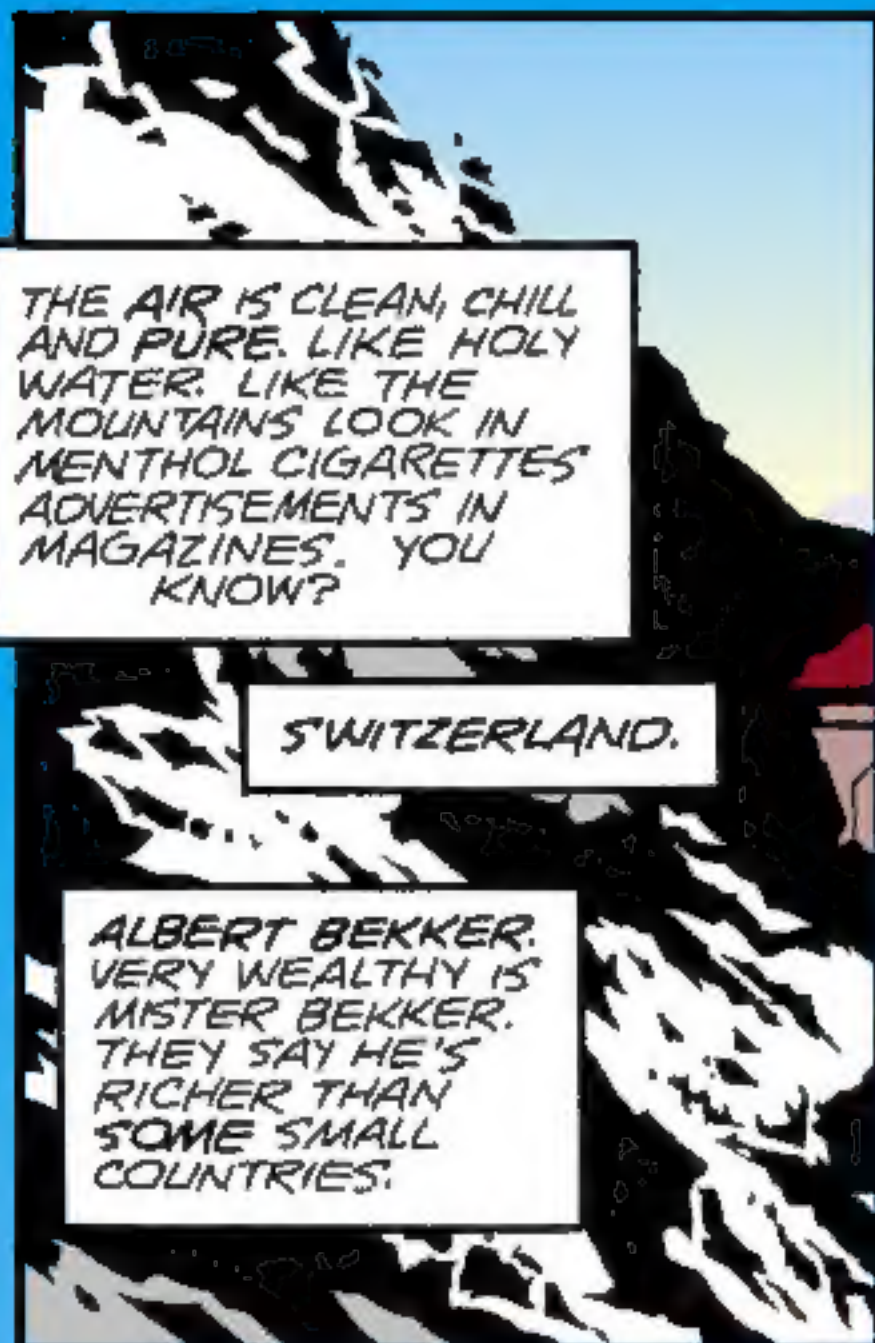
AND HARRY AJAX WAS NEVER SEEN AGAIN. THAT NIGHT, AT SOME POINT BETWEEN NINE O'CLOCK AND MORNING, HE VANISHED FROM THIS EARTHLY PLANE.



THE LOUD, QUIET MAN WAS GONE FOREVER.







THE AIR IS CLEAN, CHILL AND PURE. LIKE HOLY WATER. LIKE THE MOUNTAINS LOOK IN MENTHOL CIGARETTES ADVERTISEMENTS IN MAGAZINES. YOU KNOW?

SWITZERLAND.

ALBERT BEKKER. VERY WEALTHY IS MISTER BEKKER. THEY SAY HE'S RICHER THAN SOME SMALL COUNTRIES.



LIKE ENGLAND AND BELGIUM.

SANDS.



MY PEOPLE! MY AGENTS! THEY THINK THEY'VE FOUND A TRACE OF IT!

OH, YEAH? TRACE OF WHAT?



THE SHIRT, MAN! HARRY AJAX'S SHIRT!

OH, THAT! STILL OFF ON YOUR GATEWAY TO HEAVEN TACK, HUH?



ALL I ASK IS COURTESY, SANDS. DON'T FORGET WHO PAYS YOU.

ALL RIGHT, MISTER BEKKER. I'M LISTENING.



THAT SHIRT HAS BEEN ALL OVER THE WORLD IN THE SIXTY YEARS SINCE ITS CREATION. A WHISPER OF IT HERE. A RUMOR THERE.



MY PEOPLE TRACED THE SHIRT TO BRISBANE, MISSED IT, BUT FOLLOWED THE LEAD TO CAPE HORN WHERE--

WHOA, CHIEF!

COURTESY OR NOT, I DO NOT NEED A TOUR OF THE WORLD. WHERE'S THE SHIRT? YOU WANT ME TO GET IT, RIGHT? THAT'S WHERE WE'RE GOING WITH ALL THIS?



SO WHERE'S THE SHIRT NOW?



SIGH.

MY AGENTS HAVE TRACKED IT TO AMERICA.

A PLACE CALLED...



"...OPAL CITY."



HARRIS  
94



PEZ  
YOU GOT, HUH?  
CREATURE? FRANKIE?  
WOLFMAN?

NO? THEN  
WHAT ABOUT ZORRO?  
THE HUMANS? THE  
SPECTRES? THE PSYCHE-  
DELICS? I COULD  
USE ANY OF  
THOSE.

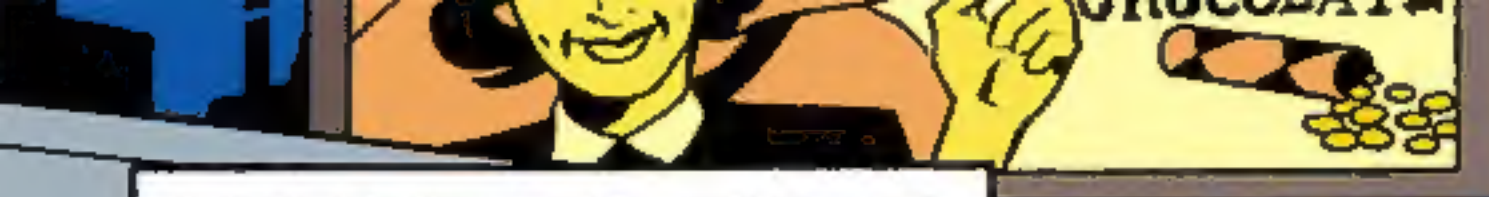
WHAT?  
YOU GOT TURTLES?  
I CAN GO INTO A  
CONVENIENCE STORE  
AND GET TURTLES. WHY  
ARE YOU WASTING MY  
TIME WITH THIS, SAMMY?  
I TOLD YOU I NEED  
GOOD STOCK FOR  
MY STORE. THE ANY-  
DAY AND EVERYDAY  
I CAN GLOM FOR  
MYSELF.

NO, I'M NOT  
MAD. I'M JUST  
EAGER TO GET  
MY LIFE BACK.  
YEAH, YEAH, I'LL  
SPEAK TO YOU.  
CALL ME.

## A DAY IN THE OPAL

WRITER: JAMES ROBINSON  
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THE TUNNELS LINK THE "OLD" OF THE ALLEYS WITH THE STREAMLINED "NEW" OF THE OPAL CITY SURROUNDING IT.

IF THE ALLEYS ARE THE CITY'S ANCIENT HEART, THEN THESE TUNNELS ARE ITS VEINS. LINKING... BRINGING LIFE.

OLDE TOWN SOUTH TUNNEL

THE TUNNEL'S EMPTY, BUT RACHEL DOESN'T MIND... ISN'T MINDFUL.

NO.

SHE HAS OTHER THINGS TO THINK ABOUT.

"MY HEART IS EMPTY," SHE WHISPERS UNDER HER BREATH. "EMPTY LIKE A PHONE BOX ON A DESERTED STREET IN A BAD, BAD PART OF TOWN."

"AND NO ONE WANTS TO GO THERE. THEY'RE FEARFUL. AND THE WIND BLOWING DOWN THAT BAD, DESERTED STREET IS COLD AND SPITEFUL."

ONE SUCH LIFE IS RACHEL FOSTER.

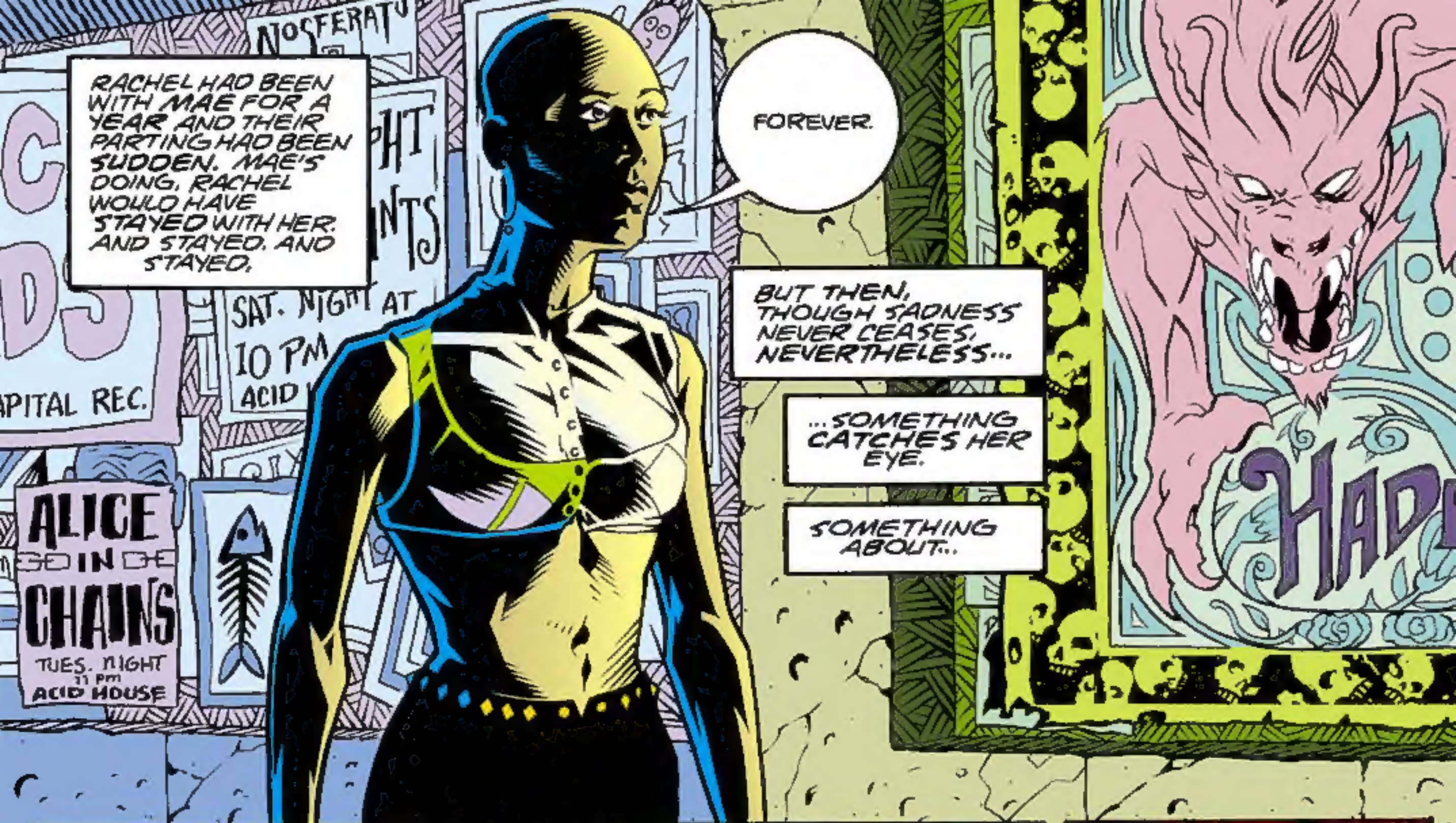
"I NEED--"

"MY--"

"MY--"

"MY LOVER HAS LEFT ME."





RACHEL HAD BEEN WITH MAE FOR A YEAR AND THEIR PARTING HAD BEEN SUDDEN. MAE'S DOING, RACHEL WOULD HAVE STAYED WITH HER, AND STAYED, AND STAYED.

FOREVER.

BUT THEN, THOUGH SADNESS NEVER CEASES, NEVERTHELESS...

...SOMETHING CATCHES HER EYE.

SOMETHING ABOUT...



THIS POSTER, IT'S--

HARD TO DESCR--



AEEHHHH







THE OPAL.

THE SOUNDS  
OF THE OPAL.

LIKE NOWHERE ELSE,  
YOU LISTEN, YOU HEAR.  
THERE'S MUSIC IN EVERY  
FOOTSTEP AND WINDOW  
SLAMMING SHUT AND  
TAXI BREAKING FAST TO  
TURN A SHARP CORNER  
AND SEWER/SUBWAY  
GURGLE.

SOMEBODY'S PLAYING A  
A SNARE DRUM, SYNCOP-  
ATED, OF COURSE. AND  
THE DRUMMER'S VERY  
GOOD. EVEN IF IT'S  
REALLY A BUS ENGINE  
AT A RED LIGHT.

IN THE ALLEYS, THERE'S AN  
ARGUMENT BETWEEN TWO  
LOVERS. A SKA TAPE PLAY-  
ING IN SOMEONE'S CAR  
TURNS THE WHOLE THING  
INTO OPERA.

A SOFT TINKLING  
NOISE FAR OFF  
AND AWAY, LIKE  
A FEATHER  
STROKING A  
XYLOPHONE. IT'S  
THE CINEMA  
LUNA'S FLICKER-  
ING NEON.

LIBRA AVENUE, WHERE  
THE LAWYERS HAVE  
THEIR SEDATE OFFICES,  
ALWAYS SEEMING TEN  
DEGREES COOLER  
THAN ANY OTHER PART  
OF TOWN. WHERE A  
BREEZE THROUGH THE  
TREES IS SWEET AS  
ANY HARP.

AND THERE'S THE HORN SOLO TRAFFIC  
JAM ON ZULU BOULEVARD. AND THERE'S  
A BLANKET OF FINCHES THAT TAKE TO  
THE SKY OVER THE CHOWDER DISTRICT.  
THEIR SCREECH HAS A LILT IN THIS  
CITY. NOWHERE ELSE BUT HERE.

AND THE TUBA-PLAYING TUGBOAT  
IN SEVEN COLORS RIVER THAT  
SERENADES ITS LOVER, THE  
SHORELINE.

AND, OF COURSE, THERE'S  
BURNLEY STREET, THE  
BUSIEST STREET, THE  
LIVELIEST. WHERE THE  
SOUND OF PEOPLE AND  
CARS AND SHOPS AND ALL...  
AND EVERYTHING ELSE...  
COMBINE. A CONCERTO  
OF CANNON FIRE AND  
BUTTERFLIES AND A  
HUNDRED VIOLINS.

AND...

AND...

AND...

OR SO JACK  
THINKS. FOR NO  
ONE LOVES THIS  
CITY MORE. OR  
SO JACK  
THINKS.

WHOA, YEAH. THIS  
BAD BOY'LL SCARE  
THE CRIMINALS...  
OR... BRING A  
SMILE TO THEIR  
FACES, DEPENDING  
ON HOW WEIRD  
THEY ARE.

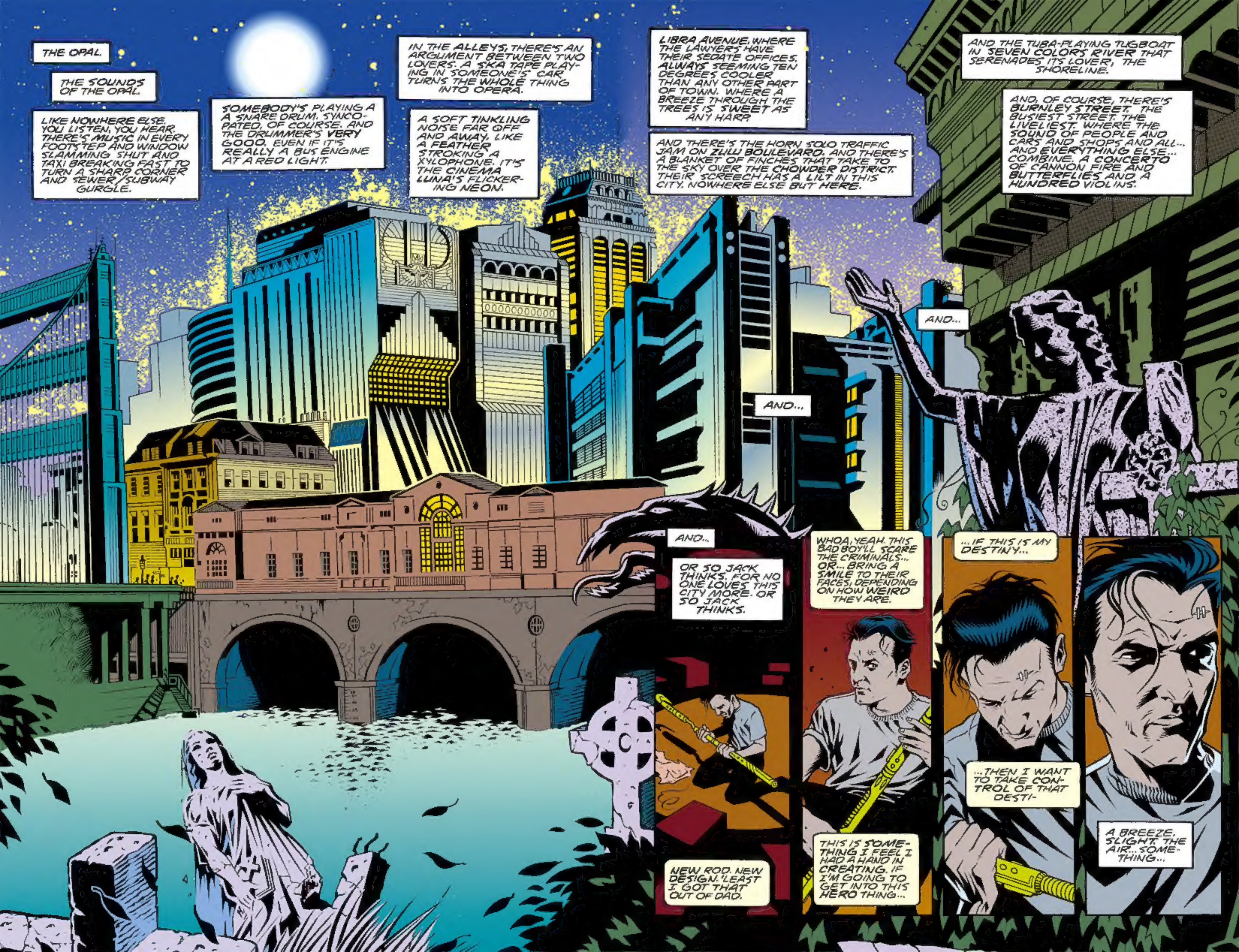
...IF THIS IS MY  
DESTINY...

...THEN I WANT  
TO TAKE CON-  
TROL OF THAT  
DESTI-

A BREEZE.  
SLIGHT. THE  
AIR... SOME-  
THING...

NEW ROD. NEW  
DESIGN. 'LEAST  
I GOT THAT  
OUT OF DAD.

THIS IS SOME-  
THING I FEEL I  
HAD A HAND IN  
CREATING. IF  
I'M GOING TO  
GET INTO THIS  
HERO THING...







...BEHIND HIM!





STAY  
BACK.

YOU!

GET BACK...  
AWAY FROM ME.  
I SWEAR  
I'LL--



WHAT?

AND WHAT  
DO YOU THINK  
I'M GOING TO  
DO TO YOU,  
FOR THAT  
MATTER?



I COME IN  
PEACE,  
JACK.  
REALLY.  
RELAX.

I...  
AM--



I'VE  
GUESSED  
WHO YOU ARE.  
THE SHADE,  
RIGHT? MAN,  
WHAT ARE YOU  
THINKING,  
SNEAKING UP  
ON ME LIKE  
THAT?

ALMOST  
GAVE ME  
A HEART  
ATTACK.





WHAT IF I'D  
JUST STARTED  
BLASTING  
AWAY WITH  
THE COSMIC  
ROD?

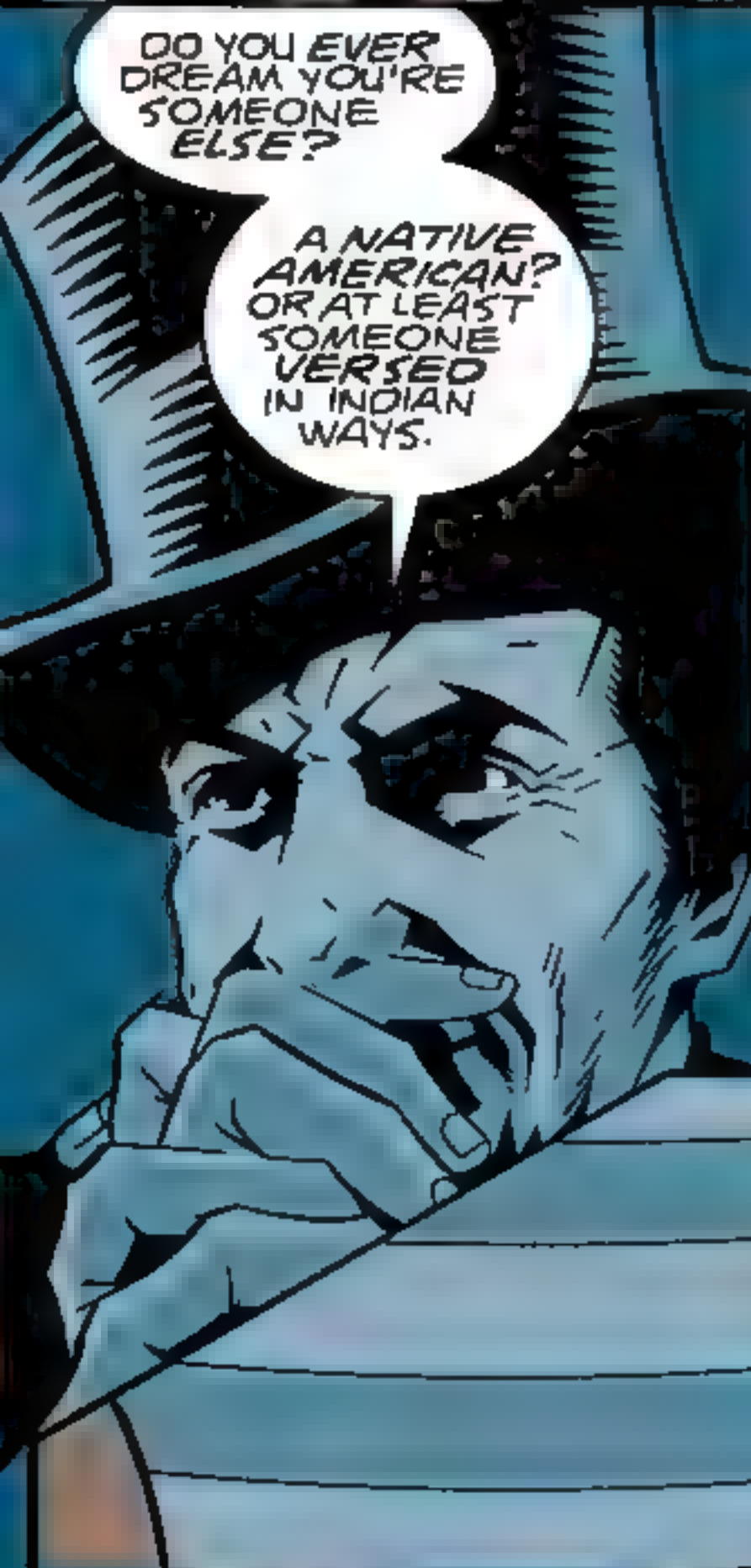
I MIGHT  
HAVE  
KILLED  
YOU.

BUT YOU  
DIDN'T.  
BECAUSE.

BECAUSE?



YOU *KNEW*. INNATELY,  
YOU KNEW I WASN'T A  
TRUE THREAT. I'M SURE.  
THE HERO IN YOU. JUST  
LIKE YOU KNEW TO TURN  
AS I ENTERED. I GAVE  
NO WARNING, YET  
YOU *KNEW*.



DO YOU EVER  
DREAM YOU'RE  
SOMEONE  
ELSE?

A NATIVE  
AMERICAN?  
OR AT LEAST  
SOMEONE  
VERSED  
IN INDIAN  
WAYS.



WHAT? NO.  
LOOK, I HATE TO  
SOUND RUDE,  
BUT THIS IS ALL A  
BIT TOO...

...BERGMANESQUE  
FOR ME. WEIRO,  
HALF-FINISHED BITS OF  
SENTENCES. STRANGE STARES.  
PREGNANT PAUSES.  
THAT *MIGHT* WORK IN A  
CALVIN KLEIN COMMERCIAL,  
BUT NOT WITH ME.

ACTUALLY, I'M THINKING  
OF FELLINIESQUE, AREN'T  
I? MAN, HOW EMBAR-  
RASSING... GETTING  
MY "ESQUES"  
MIXED UP.



YOU FIND THIS  
AMUSING?

I LAUGH SO I  
MAY NOT WEEP.  
OR HOWEVER THE  
SAYING GOES.

NO, I DON'T  
DREAM OF  
PAST LIVES.





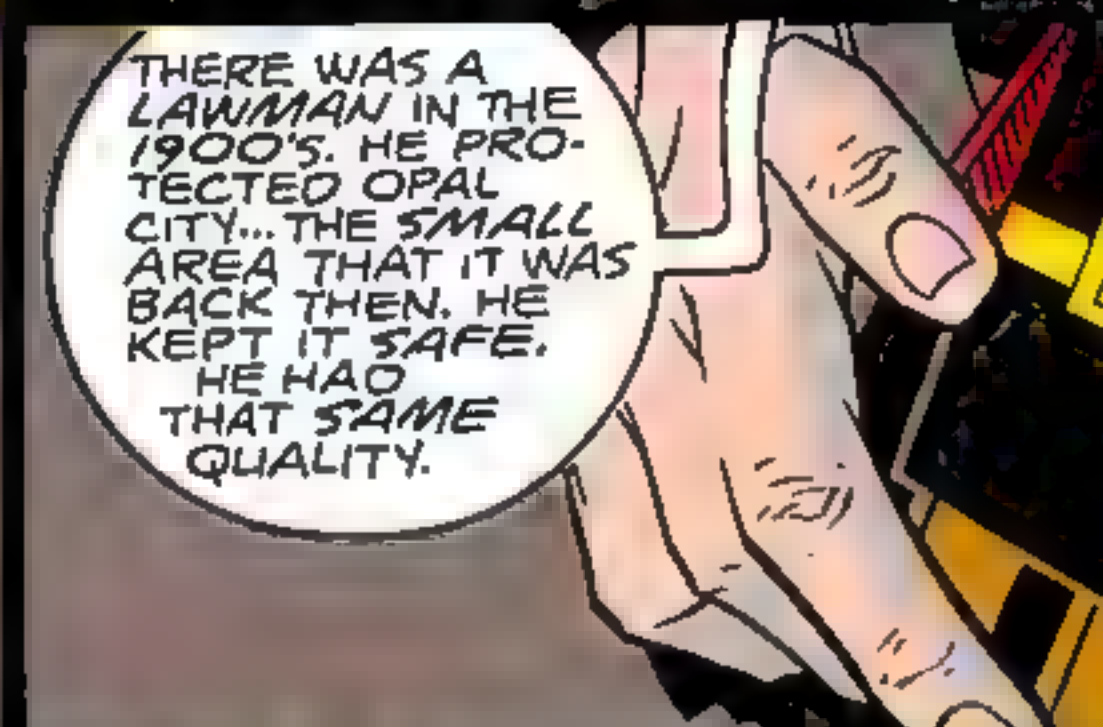
SO YOU DO BELIEVE IN PAST LIVES?

THOUGH... THINKING 'BOUT IT...

...ACTUALLY, I DO. BUT NOT A NATIVE AMERICAN. NO, I'M A NAPOLEONIC SPY. MY NAME'S ROSA IN THE DREAMS. FUNNY NAME FOR A GUY, I KNOW. BUT THERE YOU ARE. LOTS OF SWORDS AND SWASHBUCKLING.

I DON'T... KNOW... QUITE WHERE THIS IS LEADING.

I WANT OPAL CITY TO REMAIN THE... LANGUID PLACE IT WAS BEFORE THE MIST HAD HIS RECENT FUN. I SEE IN YOU SOMETHING... SPECIAL. SOMETHING EVEN YOUR FATHER LACKS... A QUALITY NEEDED TO GUARD THIS CITY.



THERE WAS A LAWMAN IN THE 1900'S. HE PROTECTED OPAL CITY... THE SMALL AREA THAT IT WAS BACK THEN. HE KEPT IT SAFE. HE HAD THAT SAME QUALITY.



HE WAS A WHITE MAN RAISED BY INDIANS. QUITE A LIFE HE HAD. AND IN HIS TWILIGHT, HE CAME TO THE OPAL... AND EVERYONE HERE KNEW SAFETY.



OH, SO YOU WERE THINKING HE AND I WERE--

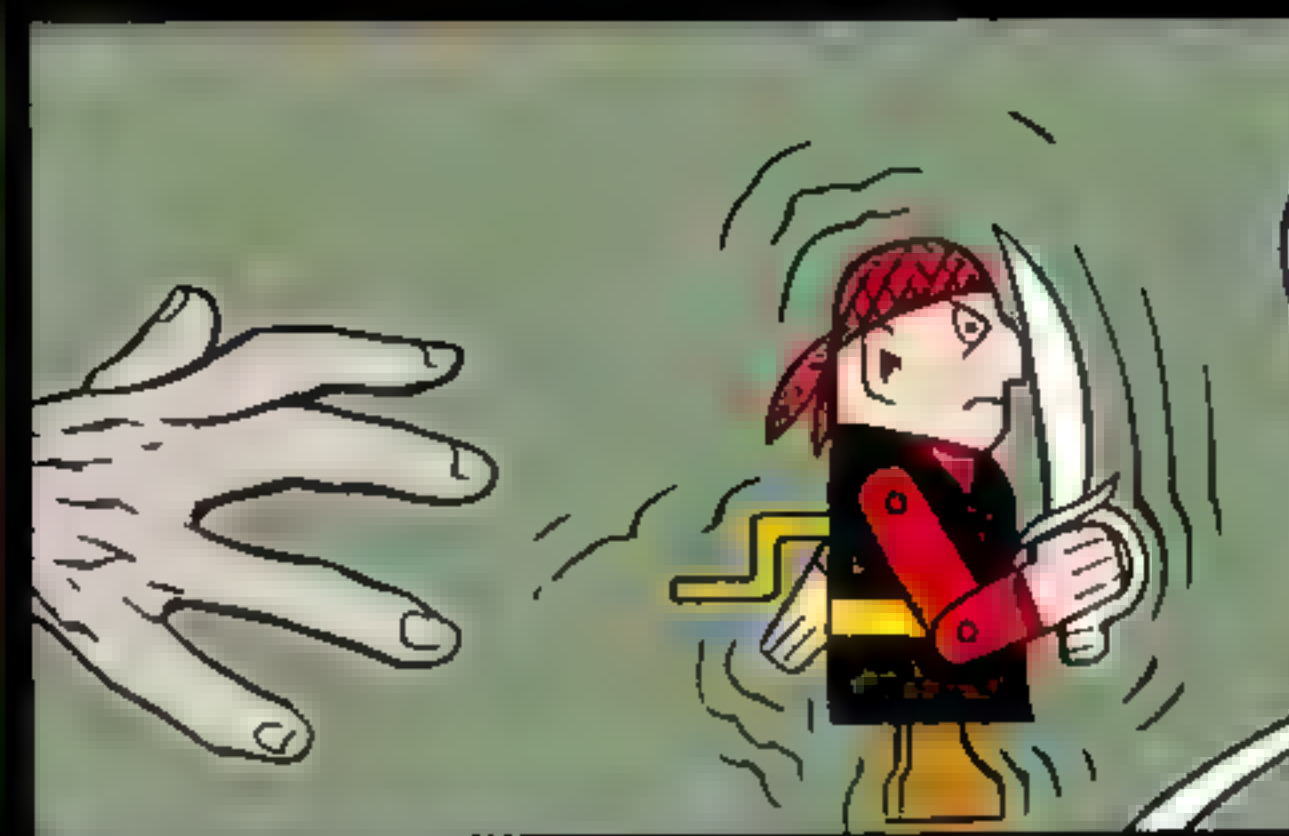


A MUSING. NOTHING MORE.

BUT IF YOU ARE GOING TO BE THE OPAL'S CHAMPION, I FEEL YOU SHOULD BE FOREWARNED OF WHAT THIS CITY IS. ITS ROOTS. ITS PAST.



I'VE BEEN KEEPING JOURNALS, MY PERSONAL DOCUMENT OF THE OPAL. I'D LIKE YOU TO READ A VOLUME. WHEN YOU'RE DONE, I'LL BRING ANOTHER.



WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I LIKE TO READ? WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I EVEN CAN?





I KNOW CHARACTER. I KNOW YOU, JACK.

NO, YOU DON'T. NO ONE KNOWS ME... WHAT I AM... HOW I THINK.

SUDDENLY MY FATHER'S CALLING ME 'STARMAN'. YOU'RE CALLING ME 'HERO'!! NONE OF YOU KNOW THE TRUTH.

OH, I THINK I DO.



AND... I'VE ANOTHER GIFT FOR YOU.

OH, YEAH? LET ME GUESS, BELA LUGOSI'S AUTOGRAPH?

SOMETHING THAT MIGHT CURB YOUR GLIB TONGUE. I WAS IN THE MUSEUM, THE WING YOUR MOTHER BEQUEATHED... THE ONE THE MIST'S HIGH JINK LAID WASTE TO.

AMONG THE RUBBLE...



...I FOUND THIS.

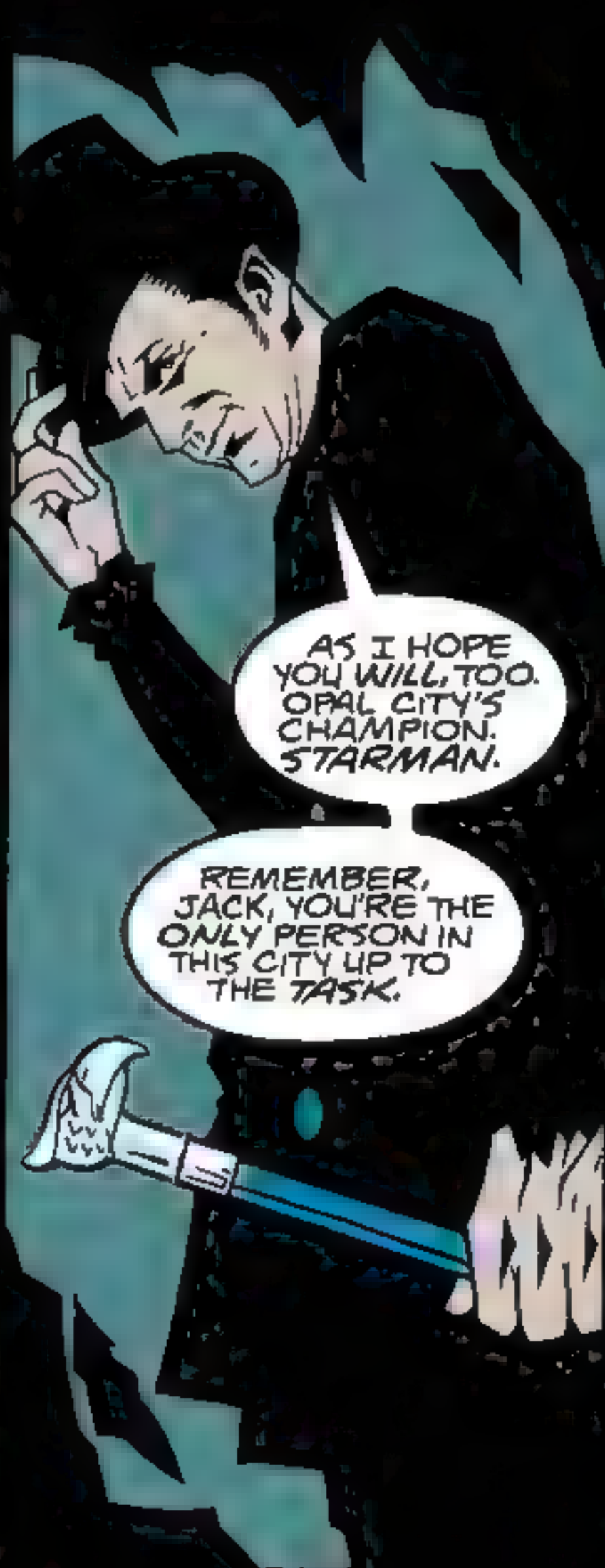
THE PLAQUE HONORING HER. I THOUGHT YOU'D WANT IT.

I... I... GUESS I DO. UM... I GUESS I SHOULD SAY THANKS, AS WELL.

THANK ME BY READING MY JOURNAL.









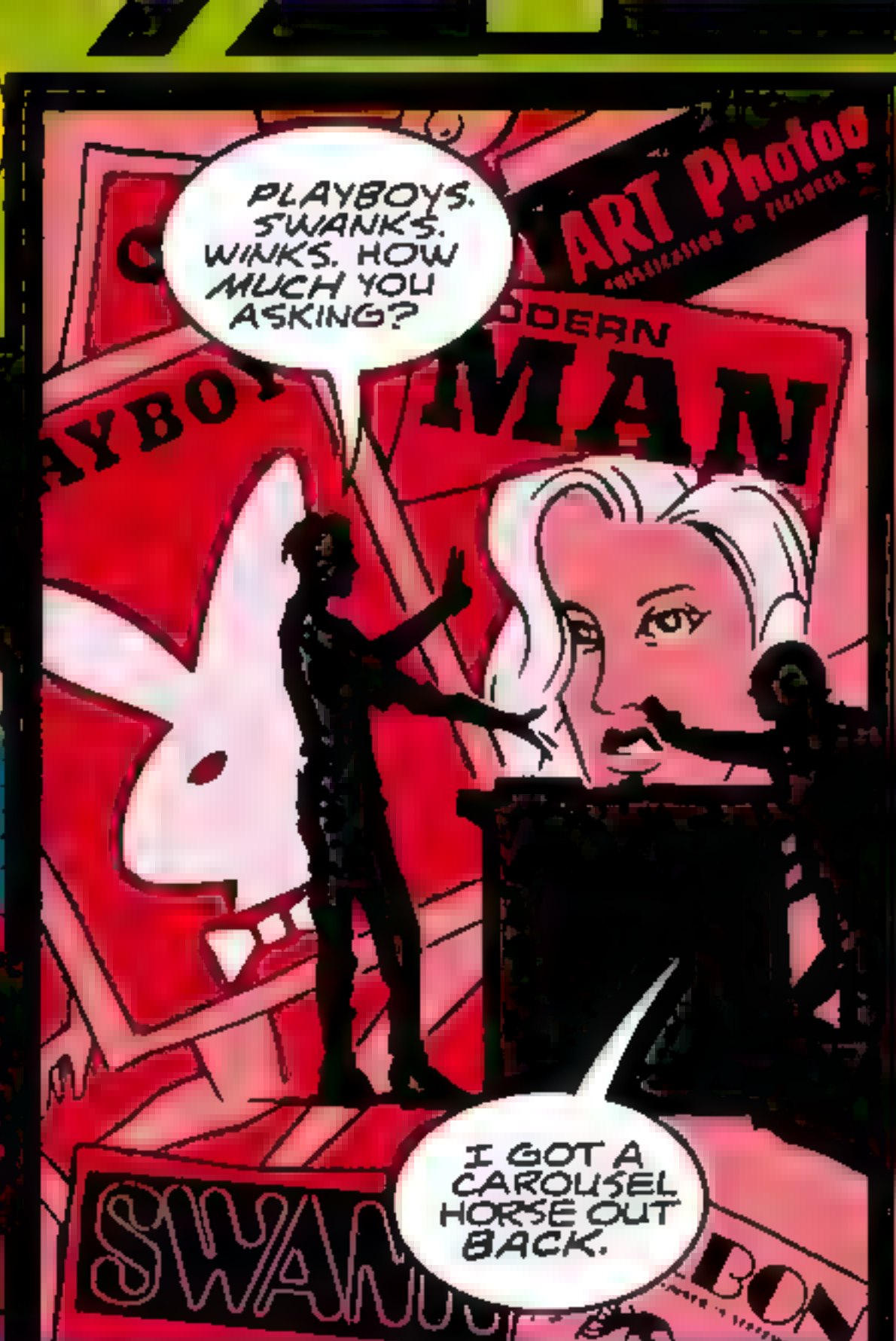


THREE HUNDRED.

NOOOO... CAN'T DO IT. TWO HUNDRED.

TWO SEVENTY-FIVE.

TWO AND A QUARTER.



PLAYBOYS. SWANKS. WINKS. HOW MUCH YOU ASKING?

I GOT A CAROUSEL HORSE OUT BACK.



I SAW ONE SHOP YESTERDAY. TOO MUCH RENT FOR NOT ENOUGH SPACE, THOUGH.

GOD, I AM SO SICK OF USING GARAGE SPACE FOR EVERYTHING.

GREEN, YOU SAID? OR RED?



SMART ONE, JACKIE YEAH, THIS WAS A GOOD IDEA.

MY OLD SHOP, MY POOR, OLD SHOP.

GOD, I FEEL DEPRESSED.





GOOD  
EVENING,  
KNIGHT...



...I'VE BEEN  
WAITING  
FOR YOU.

OH, YEAH,  
NOW WHAT?

LOOK, IF YOU'RE  
SOME SUPER-  
POWERED NUT-  
CASE WHO'S  
GOING TO ATTACK  
ME, CAN YOU AT  
LEAST LET ME  
PUT THE KING  
DOWN FIRST.

OF COURSE.  
AND I DON'T INTEND...  
WANT TO ATTACK YOU. NO.  
NOT UNLESS I HAVE TO.



HAVE TO?  
WHY, THEN?  
WHY FOR  
ART THOU?

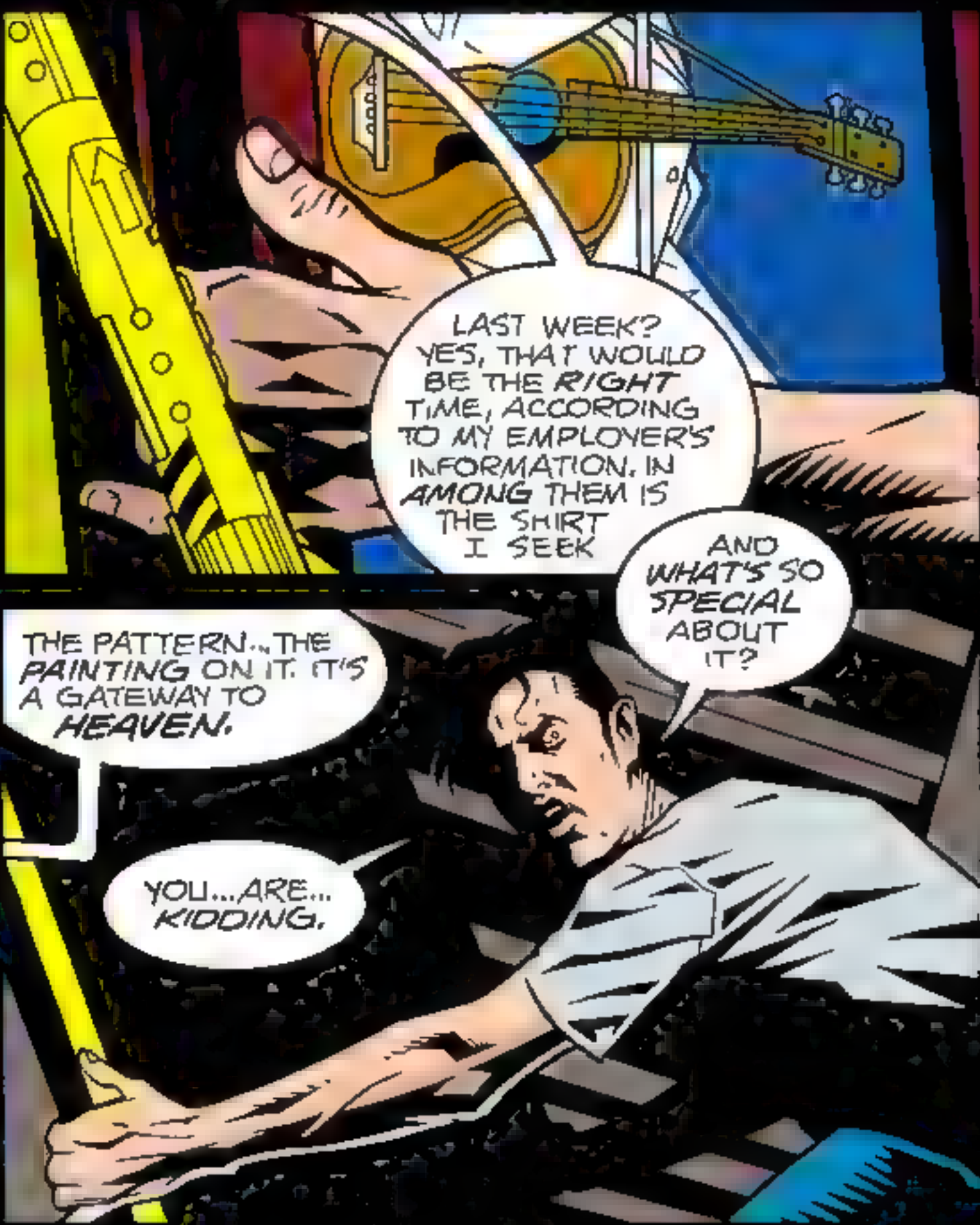


YOU HAVE  
SOMETHING  
MY EMPLOYER  
WANTS.

YEAH, AND I BET  
HE'S QUITE THE  
BARGAIN HUNTER.

A HAWAIIAN  
SHIRT. A MAGICAL,  
MYSTICAL  
HAWAIIAN  
SHIRT.

I GOT A PILE  
OF SHIRTS IN LAST  
WEEK. STILL SORTING  
MY NEW STOCK OUT,  
THOUGH, AND HAVEN'T  
HAD TIME TO GET  
TO THEM YET.



LAST WEEK?  
YES, THAT WOULD  
BE THE RIGHT  
TIME, ACCORDING  
TO MY EMPLOYER'S  
INFORMATION. IN  
AMONG THEM IS  
THE SHIRT I SEEK

AND  
WHAT'S SO  
SPECIAL  
ABOUT  
IT?

THE PATTERN...THE  
PAINTING ON IT. IT'S  
A GATEWAY TO  
HEAVEN.

YOU...ARE...  
KIDDING.



I KNOW, I KNOW. I HAD A HARD TIME KEEPING A STRAIGHT FACE WHEN MY BOSS TOLD ME. BUT THERE YOU ARE.

...GOT MY... MEANS OF DEFENSE, TOO.

I'M NOT LETTING YOU ROB ME. I'LL FIGHT YOU IF I HAVE TO. ON PRINCIPLE, I'LL FIGHT YOU.

I DON'T WANT TO, MAN, I AM STILL SO WEARY AND MESSED UP FROM A FIGHT I HAD IN THE CLOUDS RECENTLY.

WELL, WHAT? WHAT NOW? YOU'VE GOT THE GUN. AND I'VE--

AND I DON'T MUCH WANT A MAGIC SHIRT IN AMONG MY STOCK, EITHER. BUT I WON'T JUST LET YOU ROB ME.







YOU DON'T WANT THE SHIRT?

A GATEWAY TO HEAVEN?

TO YOUR BOSS, THAT MIGHT SOUND LIKE A GOOD TIME.

NOT ME.

CHIKY CHAK



WELL, WOULD YOU SELL THE SHIRT? WHAT ABOUT THAT?



YEAH. ALL RIGHT. I GUESS.



YOU GO AND HUNT THROUGH FOR THE THING, THOUGH. I DON'T EVEN WANT TO SEE IT.



YEAH, DAD...

7 COLORS  
FLORIST

THE BROS.

OLDTOWN

1880

691  
OPD

THAT'S RIGHT,  
THE SHADE, YEAH.  
A JOURNAL, MOM'S  
PLAQUE, THEN  
LATER THE SECOND  
GUY, WANTED  
THE SHIRT.

WHAT  
AN EVENING.  
WHAT A WILD,  
WILD NIGHT.

YOU'LL  
HAVE  
WILDER.

PHYSICS = {X,

$$F = ma$$
$$= (30,000 \text{ kg}) \times$$
$$1.5 \text{ m/s}^2$$
$$= 45,000 \text{ kg} \cdot \text{m/s}^2$$
$$= 45,000 \text{ N}$$

$\sigma = \text{RANKER}$

$\sigma = \text{RATIO}$

THAT'S IT!  
BINGO!

REALLY? YOU  
DON'T SAY, AND  
THANKS FOR THE  
REASSURING WORDS,  
POP. JEEZ, FRED  
MACMURRAY'S GOT  
NOTHING ON YOU.

HAHA, SORRY, IT'S JUST...  
I'M GUESSING YOU ONLY  
INTENDED TO HONOR YOUR  
PROMISE TO THE TIMES  
THAT YOU HAD TO.  
THEREFORE... BY AVOID-  
ING THE WEIRDNESS  
THAT GOES WITH SUPER-  
HEROICS, YOU MIGHT  
NEVER HAVE A REASON  
TO BE STARMAN AT  
ALL... EVER.

AM I  
RIGHT?

WELL, UNTIL I  
FOUND A NEW  
SHOP, MAYBE.  
UNTIL I GOT  
MY LIFE BACK  
IN GEAR.

THAT'S  
THE THING,  
JACK, MY BOY.  
I DIDN'T WANT TO  
TELL YOU EARLIER  
WHEN WE STRUCK  
OUR DEAL THAT YOU'D  
PLAY THE HERO, BUT...

...THE  
WEIRD-  
NESS  
FINDS  
YOU.

LIKE  
IT OR  
NOT.



EPILOGUE.

9:45 SWISS TIME.  
WHEN SANDS GIVES  
THE HAWAIIAN SHIRT  
TO BEKKER.

THE RICH MAN CRIES...  
BURSTS INTO TEARS THEN  
AND THERE. OH, OH, OH,  
THE JOY HE FEELS.  
SANDS FEELS AWKWARD  
AT THE SIGHT OF THIS.  
HE TAKES HIS PAYMENT  
AND GOES.

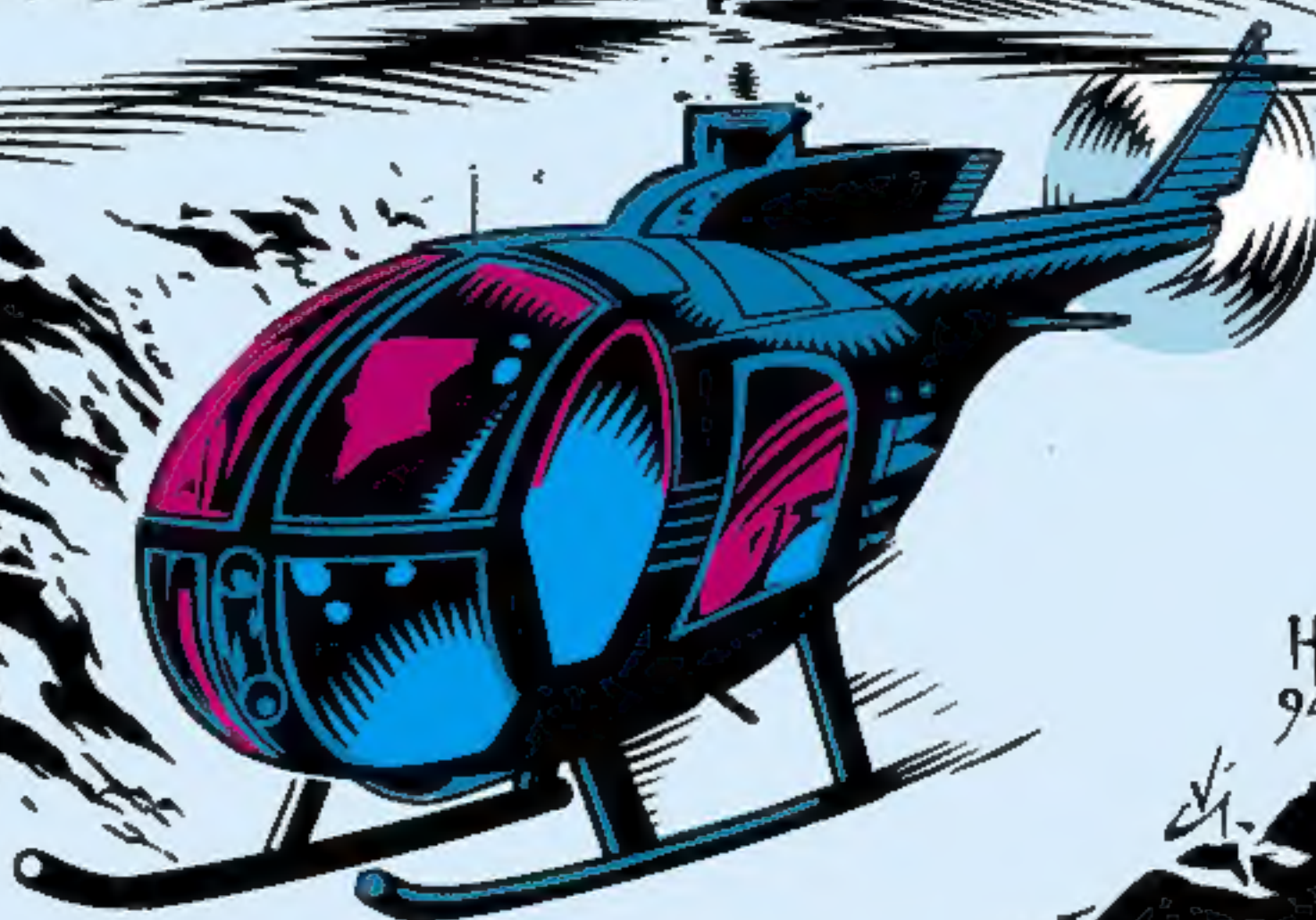
BEKKER IS LEFT ALONE.  
HIM AND THE SHIRT.

IT'S 9:51 AT THIS POINT.

AND BY 9:54...

...ALBERT BEKKER IS  
GONE. NO SIGN. NO  
TRACE. FOREVER  
GONE.

OUTSIDE THE ALPINE  
WINDS BLOW SWEET  
AND SOFT AND LOW.





# Deadman Wade

"THIS IS WHAT  
AWESOME  
LOOKS LIKE".

DCP